WORLD CHRONICLE

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PROGRAMME: **"WORLD CHRONICLE"**

GUEST: Robert Muller, Chancellor
University for Peace

JOURNALIST: Louis Foy, France Soir
Linda Fasulo, National Public Radio
Norberto Svarzman, Inter Press Service

MODERATOR: Michael Littlejohns

SYNOPSIS

ROLE OF UNIVERSITY FOR PEACE

Robert Muller, Chancellor of the United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica, discusses the role this University plays in promoting peace studies and strategies. He suggests that more efforts should be exerted to create a new peace order. Mr. Muller forecasts that with population explosion in poor countries violence could erupt if the international community doesn't work for peace and devote more resources to economic and social development.

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Executive Producer: Kamil Taha
Director: Livingston Hinckley
Production Assistants: Diane Barkley
Eloisa Ugalde

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VOICE From United Nations Headquarters in New York, this is **WORLD CHRONICLE**, an unedited interview programme about major global issues. Here now to introduce our guest is the host of today's **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

LITTLEJOHNS: I'm Michael Littlejohns and this is **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

During the last 100 years, the world has witnessed more than 150 armed conflicts. Two were of a global nature. Many disputes have brought on the peoples of the world untold destruction and suffering. Most of the wars could have been averted if serious collective efforts were exerted to save the peoples of the world from the scourge of war. Since its establishment in 1981, the United Nations University for Peace has worked to realize this dream common to all humankind.

Our guest today, Robert Muller, is Chancellor of the University for Peace in Costa Rica. A national of France and a former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Muller has been in charge of the University since 1986. He's also the author of a number of books on the potential of global co-operation.

He will be interviewed here at United Nations headquarters in New York by: Louis Foy of France Soir; Linda Fasulo of National Public Radio; and Norberto Svarzman of Inter Press Service.

Mr. Muller, welcome to **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Muller, how did the idea for the University for Peace develop? What is the connection with the United Nations since there's already a United Nations University in Tokyo?

MULLER: The idea of a United Nations effort in the field of education came from former Secretary-General U Thant who was a teacher and who after ten years of Secretary-Generalship one day said to me when I was his assistant, "Robert, the present generation will not be able to make peace. I believe that only a generation that has been educated differently can make peace". And he said, "I'm a teacher so I know about this and I think that the United Nations should do more in the field of teaching and education". So we talked about it and I said, "well, you're about to leave the UN, do you have a dream in this regard"? He said, "yes, I would be happy if a United Nations University could be created". And I said, "well, why don't you express the dream"? And he had a couple of sentences in his yearly report and the following day delegations called him about how interesting was the United Nations University. What does the Secretary-General mean? Then, as usual, a committee was established and a university was created. It was created in Tokyo but it didn't really respond to the dreams of U Thant who saw it as peace university and also a rather spiritual university. He was a Buddhist, he was very deeply spiritual. He was a wonderful man and it became not even a university - it has no students - it is mostly a university that grants monies through universities in the poor countries in fields where they have very little resources, for example, deserts, ocean biology. There are many disciplines where in the poor countries, you have nothing - and mostly on global problems. So the university in Tokyo is a granting institution to help the poor countries teach on subjects which are of a global nature like population control, the environment, reforestation, etc.

LITTLEJOHNS: And your university in Costa Rica is entirely different?

MULLER: One day after a number of years, the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Carasso - Costa Rica being a country which has taken many initiatives for peace at the United Nations. As you know, it's a demilitarized country; every year, it comes up with another proposal in the United Nations. He came to the UN and proposed the creation of a University for Peace and when the Japanese said, "well, we have UN University in Tokyo", he said, "but they are teaching everything except peace and we would like to see peace taught". The General Assembly accepted the proposal and accepted also the offer of Costa Rica to have it in that country. And I personally love the idea. I remember I ran down to the General Assembly to congratulate him because I thought that this was something that had a great future, especially that it was located in a country that can be proud to have lived without a military since 1948 and which as a result is the most prosperous country in Central America. So it was created and it has had many difficulties. Can you imagine that only 31 governments out of 160 so far have agreed to that university?

LITTLEJOHNS: You mean they're the only ones who believe in peace?

MULLER: I have the impression that they believe much more in military academies of which there are thousands in the world than in one peace university in Costa Rica. Out of the 31 governments that have agreed to the University, I think that not more than 7 or 8 have ever given some money to it but nevertheless, the university exists. It has courses - this year it is going to have more courses as a result of a very heavy commitment by the government of Spain and other countries and also the new government, Mr. Calderón, the President of Costa Rica was Minister for Foreign Affairs who had introduced the proposals to the General Assembly. So it is very close to his

heart. He's helping the University and we have now even more ambitious projects with the Secretary-General which is to create a peace fund of the Secretary-General in the United Nations and to create several regional peace universities which would have branches, for example, in the Middle East.

FOY: Mr. Muller, you want to teach peace, how do you go about it, what are you doing, are you teaching students or future professors to spread the gospel, if I can say, around the world? Exactly how many students do you have? How much money do you have to spend?

MULLER: Very little. We have about 600 thousand dollars budget a year and most of this goes only to the gardeners, the electricity and the telephone. The courses which we've had were principally for communicators. In other words, journalists, television people, people who can give the message of peace and many of them from the poor countries. Now in November we will start with the master's degree in International Relations and we have four other master's degrees which we will start immediately if we get the necessary funds. Now, the first thing we did: the university has an international council which was appointed by the Secretary-General and the Director-General of UNESCO. The first thing we did was to establish a strategy for peace. What do you teach? How do you teach peace? It has never really been done before. The military know exactly - they have West Point, they have the academies and they have the science of war. Mr. Clausewitz and Bismarck and all these people, have developed a very sophisticated strategy and science of war that goes into every detail from the atom to the stars with nothing neglected whatsoever. In peace we've had great philosophers, nice pronouncements by the prophets but if you look for a strategy for peace for a science of peace, it does not exist. The word irenology has existed for a while - Irene

being the Goddess of Peace of Greece - but the science of peace is not something which is recognized so what we have to do is follow the example of the military. We're going to have a science of peace and a strategy for peace, from the atom to the stars, from the individual person to the total humanity, from the religions to whatever groups you have on this planet so that we can learn how to solve our problems and co-operate and work together for the ascent of the human species without killing each other. This is not a civilized society when you come to killing to solve the problem.

FASULO: Dr. Muller, you mentioned that UNESCO plays a major role in this university. The fact that the United States withdrew from UNESCO and it's been heavily criticized by western countries, do you think that this accounts for the lack of support of the university by the western world?

MULLER: I don't believe that it has a direct relationship. I don't think so. Maybe in Washington, they have not yet understood the importance of solving local conflicts peacefully rather than by military menace. You see the university is becoming extremely important now because as I live now in developing countries, I can see that it was the population explosion which continues without much help from the international community to diminish it. We are going to have plenty of violence in the poor countries. They are going to turn to violence because there's nothing left. When people are hungry, when people are desperate, when people are unemployed, when children are being abandoned as they are even in Costa Rica, people would then become violent. So that, therefore, peace education has to go hand in hand also with development. The western countries must understand that the danger is not in the stars up there for which we spend 26 billion dollars just to detect an object in out of space. The explosion, the bomb is

down here on this planet. You begin to have private armies in the poor countries. The rich are having now security guards, entire neighborhoods which are surrounded. We have now another phenomenon of private armies developing in the world. Security of co-operation, security of rich neighborhoods which is caused by the violence which derives from poverty so that this is very important.

LITTLEJOHNS: Is Costa Rica a violent country?

MULLER: Costa Rica is one of the least violent countries because it has no arms, it has no military, it's a country which is very geared to peace but at the same time, like all these countries, it has a drug problem and now recently it was the increase of the petroleum prices. The economies of these countries have been very much upset so that the leaders are no longer in command because the decision was taken by petroleum increases and since they import, the whole country sees inflation again.

SVARZMAN: Dr. Muller, I remember when the committee was established to create a University for Peace. President Caldero of Venezuela once gave us a talk and said, "it's not only necessary to achieve peace to have absence of war. It's also necessary to disarm the minds". How do you go about disarming the minds of the politicians and the military leaders?

MULLER: I would say, that as far as the political leaders are concerned, I see this university as being the university of the future heads of states. We have never had a school for heads of states on this planet since Confucius. Confucius was the only one who created one in China which lived in the same similar chaotic situation. He created a school for heads of states. At this university, on this marvelous campus,

I would like to see future ministers, future heads of states and why there? Because there, they are equals, they are in a super-national university, they know each other as equal human beings. You send them to Paris, you send them to London, you send them to Russia or to Princeton. Well, the effort there is, you invite them, you give them scholarships but to show how great America is, how great France is. Over there, they are equals and the only preoccupation is not America or Costa Rica - the only preoccupation is the world and humanity. And this is the new schooling of the heads of states; that their responsibilities are not only towards a nation but towards the world and humanity. So that for leaders, the university for the future leaders, it is absolutely essential and I hope that we are going to have more political leaders come there. I just learned that we're going to meetings of heads of states from Central America who are going to come to the university. We invite guerrillas to come and sit down with us. The government of Costa Rica is not supposed to interfere in this fantastic campus. Now for the military, it's another matter. But again for the military we will have to try to gear their activities to more productive things. Costa Rica is demilitarized. Now Mrs. Chamorro in Nicaragua is demilitarizing too. The President of Panama has announced in his opening speech to the Parliament that he wants to demilitarize Panama. I think the military should become police. We always need police against violent people but I think we have to look into the transformation of armies into a world police. We have to begin this. It cannot continue - we're spending now a trillion dollars a year. This is incredible and governments are beginning to understand that this money is needed for the poor, for the social services and so on. I'm absolutely sure that we are going towards an increased recognition of the necessity to reduce the military establishment of this planet.

LITTLEJOHNS: The programme is WORLD CHRONICLE. Our guest is Robert Muller, Chancellor of the University for Peace.

FOY: Mr. Muller, you talked about a strategy for peace. Let's take the case in point, first, the Gulf war, the war in the Persian Gulf, how would your strategy apply to it, to have prevented it?

MULLER: As a matter of fact, one of the outcomes of it is that the Secretary-General is thinking now of establishing at least 6 sub-regional universities for peace. In other words, in each continent, there will be a branch of the University for Peace and the first one he has on his mind is in Kuwait. He told me that what he has seen was a University for Peace in Central America; that he got great help from the fact that the University for Peace could have private, informal, non-official reconciliation meetings between the contras and the government of Nicaragua which he could not do in the United Nations. So he has come to the conclusion that the official United Nations where all negotiations are official or semi-official would need to be supplemented and helped in the way the University has helped in Central America, namely to get parallel, private, non-official, informal, academic, intellectual meetings to help the United Nations in their official efforts. So this is already almost one immediate outcome of what has happened in the Middle East. I can tell you, one day, I wrote a letter to Mr. Lawrence Rockefeller and I wrote in this letter to him, You know, Lawrence I've been thinking of late, if Mr. Hussein had been a student at the University for Peace, what has happened there would have never happened". And in the afternoon I get a visit from a newspaperman and he said, "Mr. Muller, this morning I was taking my coffee in the hotel and I've been thinking if Mr. Hussein had been studying at your University, we would have never had a crisis". He repeated the same words. This is the

usefulness of a ground where young leaders can know each other as human beings and later on remember that they are responsible for the fate of the world and not resort to the extreme fanaticism which we have seen in this particular conflict.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Muller, instead of writing to Lawrence Rockefeller, perhaps you should have written to Saddam Hussein?

FASULO: Mr. Muller, do you see this university as eventually perhaps being funded by the United Nations itself as one of its regular programmes or does it require that there be outside contributors?

MULLER: Its creation was a new phenomenon - namely the United Nations General Assembly established a treaty and the university is the product of adherence to this treaty. As a result of it, the United Nations is not responsible financially. The delegates more-or-less said the following, "Okay, you want to have your academic freedom. Okay, but then look for your money. In other words, if you want our money, you are going to be quite free because we are going to determine your programmes". But it doesn't matter, because the ideal of the Secretary-General now is to establish a special fund for peace with contributions from governments and also from private philanthropists and hence my letter to Lawrence Rockefeller. Out of the capital of this fund which would be established with the United Nations Development Programme, with all the financial regulations of the UN, the interest from a heavy sum - the sum of 250 million dollars is even mentioned - that out of this interest, 45% would go to the University for Peace and the rest would go to other peace initiatives taken by the next Secretary-General.

SVARZMAN: You see the situation now after the war in the Gulf more beneficial for your university because so far there has been so little echo, so little response for the university. You think now is the moment that some countries, some rich governments would give you more money, your mission will be more heard in the world?

MULLER: Let me say the following: it is that I'm not even so much worried about the resources because strangely enough the mere existence of this university has had very interesting effects. A few years ago, you could go around the world and you could not find practically any university where they would have courses on conflict resolution. Today, you have more than 300 courses on conflict resolution in universities. When I was here in the United States, most of the time I was running around helping universities establish peace chairs, peace faculties, peace courses. This is why the first thing we did at the University was a peace curriculum. I have also my own curriculum which I derived from my experience in the United Nations. It's called the core curriculum for the entire world and there are number of Robert Muller schools created in various countries which take humanity and the planet as number one and not your nation. You start from the planet and humanity and you go down to your nation. But not from the nation up to humanity which is the wrong education now. So that the university has had tremendous importance by its mere existence and the fact that it emitted messages in the world. Now at the present moment, after the Gulf crisis, people are waking up and saying, "well, my God, we have to have a new education". In other words, like this gentleman said, these young leaders should be a trained differently, they should be schooled differently. As a result of this, now there is more interest in this university than ever.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Muller, with respect, you know yc: have not been very successful. We have had 150 wars - I think almost since the end of World War II, we've had all these regional conflicts and so on. So what's gone wrong?

MULLER: At the present moment, there are 38 wars, 38 countries which have either external or internal war so we have to keep track of this. In the first place, the internal wars you cannot do anything about it because the United Nations is kept outside. Although in El Salvador, in Guatemala now, these governments are also asking the United Nations to help solve internal wars and indeed, the world is far from being the place it should be but nevertheless, I can tell you frankly as a UN official who has worked here for almost 40 years, when I was a young man coming out of World War II, I remember that my grandfather had five nationalities between France and Germany and has seen three wars. When I came to the United Nations, people told me you're going to lose your job, that in 20 years there would be another world war. Well, today I'm now 68 years old. We have had now 45 years without the world war and just before the Kuwait affair there was a host of settlements. There was Afghanistan, there was Nicaragua, there was Cambodia, there was Western Sahara, there was apartheid, there was Namibia. It was almost a mushrooming of peace settlements around the world and then came the accident. And now we have to look at the future, we have only a few years left to the year 2000. We have great years - 1992 is going to be the year of Europe. My passport now says European Community and France, number two. On the first of January 1992, I will be in my home town in Sarreguemines, Lorraine, to see the border disappear I saw from my window for years and which I hated because the other people on the side from the river were people like me. I will be there. And this has to happen for the entire world. We have to work towards this. We're going to have 1995 which is the 50th

anniversary of the UN. Fifty years of the UN, who would have predicted that the UN would survive for 50 years? The League of Nations survived only 20 years and we go towards the year 2000. We have to work hard to create a new world, to get the United Nations better, perhaps to invent something beyond the United Nations,to have another look at the political system of this planet which looks exactly like it was in the time of George Washington when he said, "this country doesn't work". New York had a war against New Jersey, everyone had a different army, everyone had a different justice, nobody paid the dues to the Washington government at that time as they do today so maybe the best way to help this planet is to sit down and say "is this the best way to manage a planet?" It's chaos. We have to do something.

FOY: Mr. Muller, we spoke recently about the Gulf war, and out of this war there's a promise of a new world order. What is your idea about this new world order? Is it just empty words or is it something which is really going to change the world?

MULLER: Indeed, I think that the new world orders have been mushrooming. You had the new world economic order, you had the new world information order, now you have the new world resources environmental order. The only new world order nobody speaks about is a new political world order but what this shows is that really we have entered the period of our evolution on this planet where humanity is trying to find its way on a given planet which we didn't even know was around 500 years ago although it existed for 4 and a half billion years. Now we know its resources, thanks to the UN. Everything is in statistics. We're healthier and now we are faced with managing this planet in peace and good order and with the well-being of all. It's an enormous agenda and it is normal that then people come out with

the proposal that we should need a new order and we will have more of this and progressively we will have to find our order the hard way with accidents, with misgivings, with giving in and taking from various parts. Just look at the Soviet Union which has given up its ideal of a world order which was of the 19th century. We have to learn now that the planet and humanity are the two main factors and we have to live in harmony with the planet. We have to live in harmony among ourselves. All these groups, all these nations, all these corporations, all these religions, all these people have to begin to understand why they are here and why they should work together and for what purpose. It's the greatest philosophical age we have ever encountered on this planet. It is a fascinating period - it's a very interesting period but it is also dangerous.

MULLER: Mr. Muller, I'm afraid that's all the time we have. Thank you for joining us on this edition of **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

Our guest has been Robert Muller, Chancellor of the University for Peace. He was interviewed here at United Nations headquarters in New York by: Louis Foy of France Soir; Linda Fasulo of National Public Radio; and Norberto Svarzman of Inter Press Service.

I'm Michael Littlejohns. Thank you for joining us. We invite you to be with us for the next edition of **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

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